

Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Canada

[Home](#) > [Content](#)Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Ministers Report to Leaders on Security and Prosperity Partnership Initiatives

OTTAWA, September 7, 2006 – The Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety, and the Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of Industry, together with their counterparts from the United States and Mexico, today released the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) Report to the three North American leaders. The report outlines progress of collaborative initiatives between Canada, the United States and Mexico in such vital areas as security, the economy, transportation, the environment, and public health.

"This report to Prime Minister Harper, President Bush, and President Fox marks the significant progress that our three countries have made under the SPP to build on our important North American partnership," said Minister MacKay. "It's a tribute to the positive, collaborative relationships that our government has developed with Mexico and the United States, and to our common commitment to work together to build a safer, more secure and economically dynamic North America."

"Thanks to our crucial work Canadians and North Americans will be protected from security threats by smart and secure borders that promote the movement of low-risk trade and travellers within North America," said Minister Day. "For example, under the Security and Prosperity Partnership, officials are developing security standards for travel documents which will be used for cross-border travel under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)."

"This partnership will mean a more prosperous Canada and a higher quality of life for all Canadians," said Minister Bernier. "We have already made important strides by creating the North American Competitiveness Council to get the advice of key business leaders, and we are working closely with them to identify opportunities for common priorities. I look forward to consulting with other groups to ensure that this partnership benefits everyone as we move toward a more prosperous future."

Ministers MacKay, Day and Bernier will meet with their American and Mexican counterparts in the coming months to continue to build on the momentum of the partnership, review progress and examine new initiatives. At that time, Ministers will also meet with the North American Competitiveness Council to discuss its preliminary recommendations to leaders.

Prime Minister Harper will host the next trilateral leaders' meeting in 2007.

This is the second SPP Report to Leaders. Canadian, U.S., and Mexican leaders launched the SPP in 2005 to develop a common North American approach to security, prosperity and quality of life issues. Leaders most recently met on March 31, 2006, in Mexico where they reaffirmed their commitment to advancing a positive agenda for the continent. Building on existing commitments, leaders agreed that five priority initiatives warranted special attention in the coming year under two complementary agendas of security and prosperity: strengthening competitiveness in North America; North American emergency management; avian and human pandemic influenza; North American energy security; and North American smart, secure borders.

The complete Report to Leaders is available at

http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/can-am/main/front_page/security_prosperity-en.asp.

For more information, please contact:

Isabelle Fontaine
Office of the Honourable Maxime Bernier
Minister of Industry
613-995-9001

Media Relations
Industry Canada
613-943-2502

Mélisa Leclerc
Director of Communications
Office of the Honourable Stockwell Day
Minister of Public Safety
613-991-2863

Media Relations
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada
613-991-0657

Foreign Affairs Media Relations Office
Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
613-995-1874
<http://www.international.gc.ca>

Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP) Accomplishments

The following accomplishments highlight the progress made to advance the SPP agenda since President Bush, President Fox, and Prime Minister Harper met in Cancun on March 31, 2006:

- To enhance the competitive position of North American firms while maintaining high standards of health and safety, officials from the regulatory, trade, and oversight agencies of all three countries met for the first time on April 18-19, 2006. The three countries discussed their respective regulatory systems and highlighted areas of cooperation. As a result, the three countries identified a core set of elements for the Regulatory Cooperation Framework to include coordinating joint work on regulatory processes, promoting best practices, and enhancing information sharing throughout the regulatory process.
- Ongoing liberalization of rules of origin is helping to improve the competitiveness of our industries by reducing transaction costs, facilitating the cross-border trade of goods, and making it easier for exporters to qualify for duty free treatment. In May, our three countries agreed to a third round of changes affecting over \$30 billion in trilateral trade with an implementation goal of 2007.
- Representatives of our three countries met on June 21 to inaugurate the North American Aviation Trilateral (NAAT) -- a new forum established to achieve the SPP's goals for civil aviation security.
- To control money laundering, Mexican and U.S. Customs officials have cooperated at an

unprecedented level. As of this summer they have made hundreds of seizures totaling millions of dollars.

- To provide a uniform agreement between local offices of the Governments of the United States and Mexico, officials from both countries signed on June 27 an agreement to implement a pilot program in El Paso and Chicago, for the safe, humane, and orderly repatriation of Mexican nationals.
- Canada and the United States completed the 2006 Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) Threat Assessment, which identified national security and organized crime threats along the Canada-U.S. border. The IBET Program has disrupted organized crime operations involved in bi-directional drug trafficking and human smuggling.
- To better coordinate cross-border emergency management, the United States and Canada engaged in "Pacific Peril" - a major exercise designed to test response plans for earthquakes and tsunamis in the Pacific Northwest. The United States and Canada also participated in the "Ardent Sentry" exercise, which used a number of scenarios to test emergency response capability.
- To protect critical infrastructure in the food and agriculture sector, U.S. and Canadian officials began exchanging information to compare methods for vulnerability assessments.
- The United States and Canada renegotiated a Framework for Cooperation to govern joint critical infrastructure protection and emergency management issues.
- The United States, Canada, and Mexico continued work to tighten and verify the security of nuclear and radiological facilities throughout North America. The United States and Canada implemented new enhanced security measures and cooperated on Force-on-Force exercises to test enhancements at nuclear facilities. The United States and Mexico performed security upgrades at key nuclear and radiological facilities.
- Canada and the United States, in partnership with the Mohawk Community of Akwesasne, hosted the first ever International Indigenous Cross-Border Security Summit to enhance awareness of the border security environment and its impact on indigenous peoples, and to create a course of action for future collaboration.
- To determine risk in advance and to process maritime cargo more expeditiously, Mexico is successfully implementing the Sea Cargo Initiative, which will allow for the electronic collection of data from the shipping lines 24 hours prior to loading at the port of origin. The United States and Canada are implementing a similar program.
- Canada has committed significant resources toward the enhancement of its air cargo security program. Canada and the United States continue to meet to strengthen bilateral cooperation in this area.
- To develop cooperative activities in all stages of avian influenza and human pandemic influenza management, a Coordinating Body of senior officials from the three North American countries has been established and has held its first meeting at which they agreed how to organize and prioritize their work.
- Energy Ministers agreed to develop recommendations to further align and strengthen energy efficiency standards, identify gaps in the research and innovation chain for key technologies, and develop a trilateral legal instrument on energy science and technology collaboration. Energy Ministers, together with the private sector, also agreed to develop recommendations to address barriers to the expansion of clean energy supply and deployment of technologies. In addition, the group's ongoing work has emphasized the importance of open, efficient, and

transparent markets through regulatory cooperation and exchanges of energy data that support market transparency.

- To develop a coordinated strategy aimed at combating counterfeiting and piracy, a task force of senior officials from the three North American countries has been established. The next meeting to discuss the strategy will take place in the fall.
- Canada hosted, in collaboration with the United States and Mexico, a "North American Marine Conference -- Towards a Shortsea Shipping Strategy for the North American Continent" in Vancouver on April 18 - 20. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to promote shortsea shipping as a means to improve the performance of national transportation systems and to contribute to environmental sustainability. It also allowed discussion on business opportunities and challenges related to shortsea shipping.

President Bush, President Fox, and Prime Minister Harper highlighted the following accomplishments at their trilateral meeting in Cancun on March 31, 2006:

- To enhance growth and competitiveness in a key sector, the North American Steel Trade Committee developed a new strategy aimed at reducing market distortions, facilitating trade and promoting overall competitiveness through innovation and market development.
- To adapt to changes in sourcing and production methods, the three countries have analyzed ways to liberalize requirements for obtaining NAFTA duty-free treatment. Changes to the rules of origin have been implemented successfully and technical teams are working on additional changes.
- To speed up response times when managing infectious disease outbreaks, save lives, and reduce health care costs, the United States and Canada signed an agreement to enable simultaneous exchange of information between virtual national laboratory networks (PulseNet).
- To make consumer goods safer, save lives, and prevent injuries, the United States and Mexico signed an agreement for advance notifications when consumer goods violate one country's safety standards or pose a danger to consumers. Canada and the United States signed a similar agreement in June.
- The United States and Canada signed an agreement, which is a milestone in pipeline regulatory cooperation, to allow increased compliance data sharing, staff exchanges and joint training. The sharing of best practices will lead to a more uniform regulatory approach for cross border pipelines.
- The United States and Canada reached a full Open-Skies aviation agreement, removing all economic restrictions on air service to, from, and beyond one another's territory by the airlines of both countries. The agreement will encourage new markets development, lower prices and greater competition.
- The United States and Mexico expanded air service in specific markets by increasing the number of designated passenger airlines per city-pair, and opening cooperative marketing arrangements (code-sharing) to airlines of either country and carriers of third countries.
- In order to increase navigational accuracy across the region, five Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) stations were installed in Canada and Mexico in 2005.
- To promote prosperity by reducing the costs of trade, the United States and Canada decreased transit times at the Detroit/Windsor gateway, our largest border crossing point, by

50 percent.

- To support increased trade and expedite secure processing of cross-border trade and travel between Mexico and the United States, six FAST/Express lanes are operating at the US-Mexico border, a new lane in Nogales will open soon, and we are working on a project for a lane in Matamoros. Exclusive lines and schedules will be implemented at nine crossings.
- To allow more efficient examination of rail cargo for hazardous materials and illicit flows of goods, the United States and Mexico have installed gamma ray equipment at key border crossings.
- To speed cargo shipping, the three countries are developing uniform in-advance electronic exchange of cargo manifest data for maritime, railroad and motor carriers.
- To improve air quality and promote a more competitive automotive industry, Mexico implemented an official standard to reduce sulfur in fuels. This will increase supply of low-sulfur fuels in Mexico.
- To increase border security, Mexican and U.S. agencies are harmonizing risk assessment mechanisms, exchanging information, and establishing protocols to facilitate detection of fraud and smuggling.
- To strengthen the integrity and security of asylum and refugee status determination systems, the United States and Canada launched a pilot project to share information on refugee and asylum claimants based on a comparison of fingerprint records.
- To address border violence, United States and Mexico signed an Action Plan to Combat Border Violence and Improve Public Safety. Officials of the two countries in Nogales, AZ-Nogales, Sonora and Laredo, TX- Nuevo Laredo completed protocols on border security and public safety.
- Under the United States-Mexico Voluntary Repatriation Program, more than 35,000 persons, including 20,500 in 2005, were returned to their home in a secure, legal, and humanitarian way.
- To increase maritime security, the United States and Canada completed joint exercises on the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers in September and in February during Super Bowl XL. Officers, who were cross-designated on vessels of the other nation, could authorize pursuit of suspect vessels crossing jurisdictions.
- To advance preparedness to address a cyber incident affecting critical infrastructure, authorities from the United States and Canada completed a multi-national exercise, Cyberstorm, in February 2006.
- To enhance aviation security, the United States, Canada, and Mexico completed training on principles to protect aircraft from terrorism threats, on marksmanship skills, and on emergency procedures.
- To enhance port security, Canada and the United States concluded port facility visits at Oakland, CA and Vancouver, BC in October 2005 to facilitate the development of benchmark security standards.
- To ensure food safety while facilitating trade, a Food Safety Coordinating Task Force was formed and is developing a prioritized list of standards to compare for similarities, differences, and scientific bases for the differences. These efforts will facilitate the development of North American standards and, as appropriate, the removal of differences in

standards.

- To enhance clarity and compatibility of energy regulation, Canadian, U.S. and Mexican regulators began regular meetings to exchange information on regulatory standards and energy market developments and to discuss bringing gas from Alaska to the North American market.
- To reduce marine air pollution, Canada and the United States have coordinated data collection, marine inventory development and air quality monitoring. The two countries are preparing to approach the International Maritime Organization to designate special areas for controlling sulfur emissions from marine vessels.
- Canada and the United States are developing Mutual Assistance Arrangements, which will enhance our preparedness for cross-border public health emergencies; Mexico has been invited to participate.

All times are reflected in Atlantic time

Date Modified: 2006-09-07